

[Charley Woods]

5241-LA [Day?]

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Harold J. Moss ADDRESS 6934 Francis St.

DATE December 20, 1938 SUBJECT American Folklore Stuff

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Charley Woods 7008 Francis St. Lincoln

"Gosh," I wouldn't have anything to tell, which would be worth anything to your you. If I hadda' gone around more and had the gumption to ask more questions in my time I would'a known lots to tell.

Just a livin' on the farm, I didn't see many people or talk much. We lived out from Dunbar village, about five miles and the south line of the farm was a sort's dividing line between the German community and the American settlers.

Whenever an American would sell out a German settler would buy in and so gradually the German settlement covered great parts of that neighborhood.

These folks of the two peoples did mingle some and neighbor but mostly they stuck pretty close to their own kind.

The Germans built their first church, the Evangelical and the preacher lived in part of this church. I never did attend this church but they kept up a good membership and all children were confirmed young and so their church grew bigger.

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My father used to tell us about the Mormons wintering at Wyoming. Nebr. or near where it is now. I guess the town later came to have four or five hundred people there at times, but it is about gone now.

The Mormons used to wait there expecting help from Brigham Young.

Our boys in the neighborhood used to go there and `chin' the girls.

It was always said and I guess with `tolerable' truth that Jesse James used to [stop?] often at old `Cap Engyart's place near us and it became known as `Cap Engyart's Hangout."

I often wonder where all the people have gone I used to know so well. They came in, settled, built their church and school and were almost as one big family. And then one by one they left us.

Its in a way kinda' funny but everyone in those days were afflicted by `head lice' which seemed to get into everybody's hair, no matter how clean and careful they were.

`Gosh,' I remember of having them and every kid in the school. Our mothers were `hard put' to overcome the pests.

They rubbed `Red Percipity' into our hair.

Some tried coal oil but were scared to keep at it because there were many stories or superstitions about its effect. We did not use it.

[One?] story which I never believed, was about a woman using coal oil on her head.

She was usin' coal oil for treatment of her scalp and hair, most likely for lice, maybe something else. It musta' been, she kept this up for a long time for she began to be sickly and her head hurt and now and then a liquid which looked and smelled like coal oil would come from her ears and eyes.

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She kept getting sicker and finally died. Her people and the doctor were puzzled and they feared a new strange sickness.

Doctors cut an opening in her head and found almost a pint of coal oil on her brain, which seeped through the skull.

And I'ma telling you right today and right around us are people who still believe in this story and this affect of coal oil on the head.

The kids used to dip their finger in coal coil and then stick their finger in their mouth to drive out worms.

Neighbors used to always go and help one another with the work of butcherin[;?] cuttin' wood, harvestin' and helpin' with the sick.

I still kinda' have the urge, but mighty few take any part in this day except on the receivin' end.

I have watched people change slow like, but I think that the two years, during the war and after made the biggest change in them and they became a little selfish and thoughtless of the other fellow.

The new children now won't ever know any different unless they live the good old way.

FORM D Supplementary

Mr. Woods reference to the boys `chinning' the Mormon girls might seem to be paralleled by the present day term of `neckin' but the two are entirely unrelated in form, action or results.

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His tale of the deadly results of coal oil as a head or haid treatment has been told recently in Nebraska and of all things by a barber[!?] It must have been handed down and around to considerable extent. It is rather fantastic and course pure fiction.

As to discouraging and putting to route the worms which shown an affinity for small children, the process here of a coal oil soaked finger stuck in the mouth is reversed.

Instead of the coal oil business some folks advise the placing of a [toothsome?] morsel of food in the mouth and keeping there, the theory being that, far from driving the worms out, it will lure then out in search of this a petizing [tidkit?] of food via the mouth.